

#CTPlaces

ADVOCATES for Humanities, Libraries, History & Preservation

Testimony of the CTPlaces Coalition

Appropriations Committee of the Connecticut General Assembly

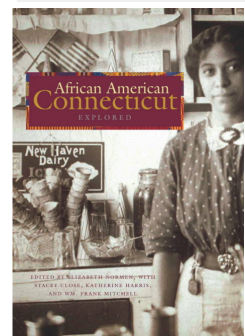
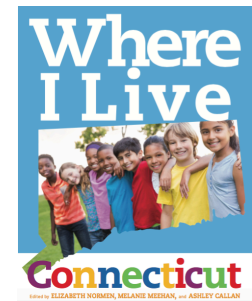
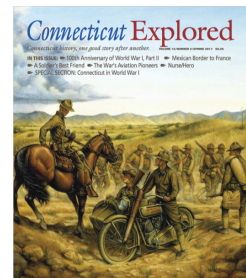
February 17, 2017

Submitted by Elizabeth Normen, 791 Prospect Avenue, West
Hartford

Good evening Senator Formica, Senator Osten, Representative Walker, and
Honorable Members of the Appropriations Committee:

My name is Elizabeth Normen, and I am the publisher of *Connecticut
Explored*, the state's nonprofit public history magazine co-published by CT
Humanities and featuring (Spring 2017) a center spread for the Connecticut
State Library's *Connecticut in World War I* commemoration; co-producer
with the state historian of *Grating the Nutmeg*, the podcast of Connecticut
history; co-editor with the Amistad Center for Art & Culture and three
distinguished African American historians (including two from the state
university system) of *African American Connecticut Explored*, and co-editor
with curriculum specialists of the **forthcoming third grade social studies
resource *Where I Live: Connecticut*** that supports the state's newly
adopted social studies frameworks.

I am here to speak for The CTPlaces Coalition, a group of 10 statewide
organizations, some of whom are with me this evening: **Connecticut
Humanities Council; Connecticut Historical Society; Connecticut League
of History Organizations; Connecticut Library Association, Connecticut
Library Consortium, and Connecticut State Library; Connecticut Trust**



for Historic Preservation and Connecticut Preservation Alliance; Connecticut Coordinating Committee for the Promotion of History; and *Connecticut Explored*.

I urge the Appropriations Committee, as it considers the Department of Economic and Community Development's budget, to right a wrong.

We ask that \$1.73 million in funding for the Connecticut Humanities Council be reinstated in the budget. This funding was removed by line-item veto last June *after* the General Assembly adopted the budget and it was signed into law. This is funding that has been in the state budget for 22 years. Eliminating it was not the intent of the legislature.

You will hear tonight many examples of the positive impact that these dollars have had across the state and the value of humanities as an economic and educational engine in this state. Every dollar of state investment in the sector yields \$63 in economic activity according to a 2015 study. The sector supports an estimated 5,300 jobs. (See graphic below.)

And yet, major harm—possibly irreparable harm—is being done and will be done to the State of Connecticut if this funding is not restored.

We appreciate the challenge ahead of you. We appreciate your careful and thoughtful deliberations.

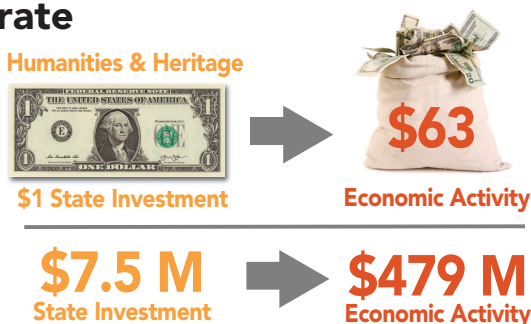
You will hear many urgent pleas tonight, some from our friends in the arts. As you well know, the arts retain in the neighborhood of \$5 million of funding in the state budget. The humanities are of equal importance to the arts and we are simply asking for fair treatment.

You will also hear testimony to the contributions that humanities, libraries, and historic preservation make to your towns: towns with historical societies and museums with thought-provoking exhibitions and exciting summer camps for kids; libraries with book programs and a local history room; towns with an historic theater, or an arts center in a rehabbed school building; an historic town green that hosts a community arts festival, or an historic mill building that is now apartments or the latest micro-brewery; and schools that are being strengthened by

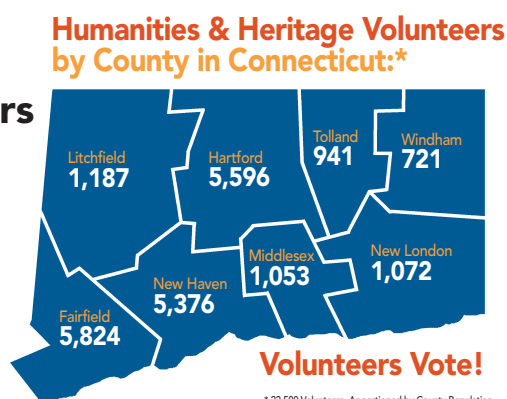
new curriculum that supports state frameworks created in collaboration with *Connecticut Explored* and your local historical society.

The testimony of the CTPlaces Coalition partners illustrates that a sound humanities, historic preservation, and libraries sector is vital to Connecticut. Please restore Connecticut Humanities to its rightful place in the state budget. Thank you.

Humanities and Heritage organizations in Connecticut **generate millions of dollars** in economic activity...



and **engage many thousands of volunteers** who highly value our state's cultural assets.



* 22,500 Volunteers, Apportioned by County Population.
Source: Datacore Partners